

MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

VEHICLE COLLISION INVESTIGATION AND REPORTING POLICY

Issued by: Fire Chief

Policy No. XX-XX

Supersedes DFRS Policy and Procedure #605 *Vehicle Investigation and Reporting*

Authority: Montgomery County Code Section 21-d.(2)(4)

Effective Date:

Section 1. **Purpose:** To establish a policy and procedure for investigating and reporting collisions and incidents involving vehicles driven/operated by Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) personnel.

It is also the goal of MCFRS to ensure that the personnel assigned to its Safety Section to investigate Fire Department collision incidents meet the requirements of NFPA 1521 *Standards for Fire Department Safety Officer*.

Section 2. **Applicability.** This policy and procedure applies to all MCFRS personnel.

Section 3. **Definitions.**

- a. **Apparatus.** Any vehicles owned, leased, or operated by MCFRS or a local fire and rescue department (LFRD).
- b. **Collision.** That occurrence in a sequence of events involving a motor vehicle which produces personal injury, death, or property damage regardless of fault, nature, and extent of personal injury or property damage. This includes occurrences resulting in no property damage, but injuring persons inside or on the vehicle.
- c. **Collision/Incident Investigation Checklist.** A document to be used as a guide for the investigation of collisions or incidents. The use of this checklist will help ensure that all collisions and incidents are investigated consistently.
- d. **Collision/Incident Investigation Kit.** A supply of materials used to properly investigate and document vehicle collisions and incidents. These Kits are carried on the MCFRS Safety vehicles, MCFRS Battalion vehicles, and other staff vehicles as appropriate. At a minimum, an Incident Investigation Kit should include:
 - A digital camera;
 - A 100-foot tape measure;
 - A can of marking paint;
 - A note pad and pencil/pen;
 - An Incident Investigation Checklist.

- e. **Collision/Incident Investigators.** Individuals authorized by the Fire Chief to investigate vehicle collisions and incidents.
- f. **Incident.** An unusual, unplanned occurrence that does not result in immediate property damage or injury, but could produce a claim against the County or a local fire and rescue department (LFRD) at a later date.
- g. **Risk Management Accountability Program (Risk MAP).** The MCFRS electronic database, maintained by the Safety Section, used to report collisions, incidents, injuries, and near misses.
- h. **Safety Officer.** Trained MCFRS personnel designated by the Fire Chief and assigned or detailed to the MCFRS Safety Section.
- i. **Safety Section.** The MCFRS Section designated by the Fire Chief to manage the Safety programs of the Department.
- j. **Supervisor.** An individual responsible for the assignment and management of MCFRS personnel at the same work site, program, or location.

Section 4. **Policy.**

- a. MCFRS intends to reduce the number and severity of **collisions** and **incidents** involving the operation of vehicles and **apparatus** through education, training, and accountability, and providing safe driving and operating practices.
- b. All **collisions** and **incidents** involving **apparatus** **must** be investigated and reported in accordance with this policy.
- c. For **collisions** and **incidents** involving a Chief Officer, the Duty Operations Chief and/or an Assistant Chief or higher rank **must** handle the post-collision drug and alcohol testing.
- d. The **Safety Officer** **must** be the lead investigator on all collisions/incidents resulting in any injuries, and for those resulting in more than \$2499 *total* damage of all vehicles and property involved (if the Safety Officer is available).
- e. All **collisions**, **incidents**, and injuries **must** be reported using **Risk MAP**.

Section 5. **Responsibilities.**

- a. **Personnel** must:
 - 1. Report **collisions** and **incidents** to the ECC via radio, to their immediate **supervisor**, and request emergency assistance and police response as appropriate;

2. Ensure proper medical attention is given to any injured person;
 3. Cooperate with, and provide truthful information to the **Incident Investigator** and police regarding the **collision or incident**;
 4. Make no statements while at the scene, except as approved by the **Collision/Incident Investigator**, as to fault, liability or preventability regarding the **collision/incident**;
 5. Make no alteration or change to the condition of the **apparatus** or equipment that would affect the nature of any investigative procedure or results;
 6. Provide a detailed written statement to the **Collision/Incident Investigator(s)** outlining the circumstances of the **collision/incident**; and
 7. Notify the County Division of Risk Management, via the chain of command, as soon as possible, and request guidance before paying any **collision/incident**-related traffic citation(s).
- b. The **Supervisor** must comply with Section 5.a. immediately above, and:
1. Ensure that the on-duty ECC supervisor has been notified of the **collision or incident**;
 2. Ensure that the **collision/incident** is properly investigated and reported;
 3. Ensure that the police are notified, as appropriate; and
 4. Complete an Employer's First Report of Injury for any injured MCFRS personnel.
- c. The on-duty ECC supervisor must:
1. Notify the proper police agency for response;
 2. Notify the closest Battalion Chief (or appropriate Chief Officer) and the on-duty Safety Officer of the **collision/incident** (via phone or radio);
 3. Upon the request of the **Collision/Incident Investigator**, send a text message to the **Collision** Notification Group, indicating: the unit involved; its stock number; the location; the disposition (PIC or PDC); and identifying a point of contact.
- d. The MCFRS **Duty Chief** must:

1. Ensure that the **collision** or **incident** is properly investigated and reported;
 2. Ensure that an **Collision/Incident Investigator** is assigned;
 3. Notify the Fire Chief and other Chief Officers as required;
 4. Ensure the LFRD Chief or designee is notified when the involved **apparatus** is owned by an LFRD, or if LFRD personnel are involved in the **collision** or **incident**;
 5. Assume the responsibilities of the **Collision/Incident Investigator** when one is unavailable;
 6. Assist the **Collision/Incident Investigator** on major **collisions** involving disabling **apparatus** damage, and whenever there is personal injury;
 7. Assist as needed in acquiring replacements for **apparatus** out-of-service as a result of a **collision** or **incident**;
 8. Assisting the **Collision/Incident Investigator** as necessary, to ensure that this Policy is followed.
- e. The **Battalion Chief** (or appropriate Chief Officer) must:
1. Report immediately to the scene of the **collision** or **incident**;
 2. Determine, with the Safety Officer, who will be the lead **Collision/Incident Investigator**;
 3. Determine whether the **collision** meets post-**collision** drug/alcohol testing parameters;
 4. Conduct the **collision/incident** investigation with the Safety Officer. However, either officer can conduct the investigation if one is not available;
 5. Notify the Duty Operations Chief, appropriate LFRD Chief, and Fleet Section;
 6. Coordinate and escort the driver(s) to the post-**collision** testing site when required;
 7. Maintain an up-to-date **Collision/Incident Investigation Kit**.
- f. The **Safety Officer** must:

1. Report immediately to the scene of the **collision** or **incident**;
2. Determine, with the Battalion Chief (or appropriate Chief Officer), who will be the lead **Collision/Incident Investigator**;
3. Conduct the **collision/incident** investigation with the Battalion Chief (or appropriate Chief Officer). However, either can conduct the investigation if one is not available;
4. Determine whether the **collision** meets post drug/alcohol testing parameters;
5. Notify the Safety Chief if: personnel or civilians are injured; a death has occurred; **apparatus** is destroyed; where there is disagreement as to preventability; or, as is otherwise appropriate;
6. Maintain an up-to-date **Collision/Incident Investigation Kit**.

g. The **Incident Investigator(s)** must:

1. Investigate the **collision** or **incident**;
2. Report immediately to the scene and ensure completion of all required reports;
3. Provide the on-duty ECC Supervisor with information to send a text message to the Collision Notification Group, indicating: the unit involved; its stock number; the location; the disposition (PIC or PDC); and identify a point of contact;
4. Follow the “**Collision/Incident Investigation Checklist**” (Attachment 1) to ensure a thorough investigation, documentation, and reporting of **incidents**;
5. Gather information from all parties including, but not limited to:
 - A. vehicle(s) registration information;
 - B. driver(s) license information;
 - C. insurance information;
 - D. scene and weather information;
 - E. photographs of scene and involved vehicle(s);and
 - F. statements from all driver(s) and witnesses.
6. Determine the cause and preventability, and report the findings to the appropriate Chief Officer;

7. Determine whether post-**collision** drug/alcohol testing parameters are met;
8. Coordinate with the police department and obtain a report number;
9. Coordinate with the MCFRS Fleet Section and/or LFRD regarding **apparatus** disposition;
10. Estimate total dollar amount of damage to all vehicles and property involved;
11. Determine whether personal injuries resulted from the **collision**;
12. Complete the **Risk MAP** report within **24 hours**;
13. Ensure that the required reports and statements of MCFRS personnel are properly completed and submitted as required;
14. Notify the MCFRS Fleet Section if County/LFRD maintained **apparatus** is involved in the **collision/incident**;
15. Coordinate with the MCFRS Fleet Section Chief/designee on the impounding of **apparatus** for inspection when mechanical failure is suspected or claimed, a serious injury occurs, or as the investigation dictates;
16. Notify/coordinate with the towing company after consulting with the MCFRS Fleet Section, as required;
17. Notify the appropriate LFRD, as required.

h. The MCFRS **Safety Section** must:

1. Review all completed **Risk MAP** reports to ensure accuracy and completeness;
2. Notify the insurance carrier and file all claim forms;
3. Attach the police report to the **Risk MAP** Report;
4. Ensure all **Collision/Incident Investigators** are qualified, as established by MCFRS;
5. Maintain the MCFRS Certified Drivers List;
6. Maintain all **Risk MAP** data;

7. Notify County Risk Management and/or Maryland Occupational Safety and Health Administration when three or more MCFRS personnel are hospitalized, or if a Line of Duty Death occurs.
- i. The MCFRS **Fleet Section** must:
 1. Assist the **Collision/Incident Investigator(s)**; and
 2. Ensure that **apparatus** involved in a **collision/incident** are evaluated for mechanical defects by a qualified mechanic, as appropriate.

Section 6. **Procedure:**

- a. When a collision/**incident occurs**, the driver/operator **must**:
 1. Stop, secure the **apparatus**, and determine whether anyone is injured;
 2. Notify ECC and the **supervisor**;
 3. Ensure that the police are notified;
 4. Assist in treating injured persons and request additional assistance, if needed;
 5. Remain at the scene of the **collision/incident** and await the arrival of **supervisor(s)**, police, and other authorities. The unit involved in the **collision/incident** may continue its response, at the unit officer's discretion, when:
 - A. the **collision/incident** occurs during an emergency response;
 - B. the situation at the dispatched location is life-threatening (e.g.: a working code, a working fire, personal injury **collision** with trauma, etc.); or
 - C. there are no injuries at the scene of the **collision/incident**.
 6. If conditions warrant leaving the scene, the driver/operator **must** record the license number(s) of the other involved vehicles, and provide the MCFRS unit number and the driver/operator's name to the other drivers. The driver/operator **must** advise other parties to remain on the scene and await the MCFRS representative(s). The unit should return to the **collision/incident** scene immediately after the conclusion of the emergency.

Section 7. **Implementation and Enforcement:** The Fire Chief is the implementation and

enforcement authority for all policies and regulations of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

Section 8. **Effective Date.** This policy is effective on _____ 2012.

Section 9. This policy supersedes DFRS Policy and Procedure #605 *Vehicle Investigation and Reporting*

Approved:

Richard R. Bowers, Chief
Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

Date

Attachment 1: Incident Investigation Checklist

(Attachment 1)

MCFRS Collision/Incident Investigation Checklist

Unit: _____

Date: ____/____/____ Time: _____

Location: _____

Battalion where collision/incident occurred: _____

Shift: _____

LFRD/MCFRS Entity Involved: _____
Specific Worksite Involved: _____

Driving Task in Progress when Occurred: _____
Active Driving Status: () Emergency () Non-Emergency () Parked ()

Record

Weather Conditions: _____

Road Conditions: _____

Intersection : () Yes () No

- > IF YES: What controlled the intersection: _____
- > IF TRAFFIC LIGHT: Color - () Red () Yellow () Green () Flash R or Y
- > DID MCFRS VEHICLE STOP BEFORE PROCEEDING THROUGH INTERSECTION?: () YES () NO

Severity of Collision : _____

Private Vehicles Involved: () Yes () No

Injured Persons: () Yes () No **Treating Facility:** _____

Reporting Police: _____

P.O. NAME: _____ **REPORT #:** _____

MCFRS INFORMATION:

Vehicle Stock #: _____

Vehicle VIN #: _____ **Make/Model/Year:** _____

Vehicle Owner: () MCFRS () LFRD

Unit Officer: _____

Unit Driver: _____ **FD ID#:** _____

Career () **Volunteer** ()

Driver Status: () Primary () Certified () Back-up () Driver Training

Detailed Driver: () Yes () No

Station: _____ **Shift:** _____

Driver License #: _____ **State:** _____ **Class:** _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

MCFRS Witnesses: (Name, Rank, Station/Shift, Riding Position, Phone #)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Total Damage to ALL property & vehicles in Collision \$: _____

MCFRS Driver Tested: () Yes () No

(>\$2499 total damage to all vehicles/property involved or any injury per MCFRS P&P #26-08.) For non-uniformed employees, there is no automatic post-testing, except for mechanics who must be tested in compliance with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) standards. Any employee may be tested "for cause."

1. Notify lab of pending drug testing request @ 240-994-4098 - 24/7
(Contact lab from scene ASAP to ensure lab personnel can respond to FROMS in a timely manner.)
2. Notify Scheduling, DOC, Safety 700, and Admin B/C of incident and drug test; place driver on NATD and AML pending lab results.

Preventable by MCFRS?: () Yes () No

Damage to MCFRS Unit: _____

Estimated \$ Damage to MCFRS Unit: _____

Vehicle Impounded: () Yes () No

Impound Location: _____

Reason Impounded: _____

OTHER VEHICLE(s) INFORMATION:

VIN#: _____

Make: _____ **Model:** _____ **Year:** _____

Plate# _____ **State:** _____

Insurance Co: _____ **Policy#:** _____

Owner Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone #: _____

Damage to Vehicles: _____

Estimated \$ Damage to Vehicle: _____

Driver Information: () Same as owner information; if not

Driver Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone #: _____ **D.O.B** ____/____/____

Driver License # _____ **State:** _____ **Class:** _____

Driver Statement:

Injured in Vehicle: () Yes () No

Injured Name: _____ DOB: ____/____/____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Treating Facility: _____

WITNESS STATEMENTS:

Name: _____

Telephone #: _____

Address: _____

In Involved Vehicle?: YES () NO ()

() Additional Witness Statements

*****REMEMBER TO TAKE AT LEAST 4 PICTURES of EACH VEHICLE
(At least one of each side)**

INCIDENT INVESTIGATORS ANALYSIS:

Analysis:

- Driving Tasks
- Final Pathway
 - Driver Errors
 - At-Risk Behaviors
 - Vehicle Hazards
 - Roadway Hazards

Causes:

- Cause & Effect
- 5 Whys
- Direct cause
- Causal Factors
- Root Cause

Corrective Actions:

- Recommendations for remediation and prevention from recurrence